"A sea-folk blinder than the sea
Broke all about his land,
But Alfred up against them bare . . .

And for one hour of panting peace
With golden crown and girded fleece
Made laws under a tree."

G. K. Chesterton,
The Ballad of the White Horse, Book I.

King Alfred the Great and the Ten Commandments

Alfred the Great was the 9th century Anglo-Saxon prince who resisted Viking invasions and united the various English kingdoms under one rule, becoming the first monarch to be known as "King of All England." He was a promoter of learning, a skillful military leader and administrator. He remains the only English king labeled "the Great."

One of Alfred's most important achievements was his codification of Anglo-Saxon rules in a Law Code. For this achievement, Sir William Blackstone, the premier legal educator of the American Founding Fathers, called Alfred the "Founder of English Law." Alfred's Law Code begins with the full-text of Exodus 20:1-17, the Ten Commandments.

Sources: Encyclopedia Britannica, Eleventh Edition
William Blackstone, Commentaries on the Laws of England, Volume I
Harold J. Berman, *Individual and Communitarian Theories of Justice: An Historical Approach,* 21 U.C. Davis Law Rev. 549 (1988).

Illustration: Alfred the Great, his son Edward and wife Eahlswith at the Witan — Assembly of the Wise.